BCM Baylor College of Medicine

WAYNE J. RILEY, M.D., MBA, FACP
Vice President and Vice Dean
Health Affairs and Governmental Relations

ONE BAYLOR PLAZA
SUITE 181A
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77030-3411
713-798-9188
713-798-2711 FAX
wriley@bcm.tmc.edu

September 12, 2006

The Honorable Tom Coburn, M.D.
Chairman
Subcommittee on Federal Financial Management,
Government Information and International Security
United States Senate
Attn: Anna Shopen
439 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Coburn:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide information about Baylor College of Medicine's research program. Baylor College of Medicine (BCM) is proud to be one of the nation's top medical schools receiving federal funding through the competitive peer-reviewed process for research grants.

1. As reported by the National Science Foundation total federal expenditures to BCM research is as follows:
FY 2000 – $193,249,000
FY 2001 – $234,394,000
FY 2002 – $259,475,000
FY 2003 – $302,764,000
FY 2004 – $312,669,000 (most current data available from NSF)

NIH funding to BCM for competitive peer-reviewed research is as follows:
FY 2000 – $169,294,000
FY 2001 – $220,110,000
FY 2002 – $262,125,000
FY 2003 – $246,410,000
FY 2004 – $248,451,000
FY 2005 – $256,809,000

BCM is home to the Children's Nutrition Research Center (CNRC), one of six federally funded human nutrition research centers in the nation and the first to conduct scientific investigations into the role of maternal, infant and child nutrition in optimal health, development, and growth.

Through a formal agreement that has been in place since 1978, the CNRC is operated by Baylor College of Medicine in cooperation with Texas Children's Hospital and the Agricultural Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The CNRC has a large live-in metabolic unit, an energy metabolism

laboratory, stable isotope and substrate analytical laboratories, a body composition laboratory, an eating behavior observation laboratory, and a plant physiology laboratory.

These unique facilities enable the center's 55 full-time faculty members to develop multidisciplinary research programs to help improve the nutritional guidelines used by physicians, parents and others responsible for the care and feeding of children.

Funding for the USDA/ARS/Baylor cooperative CNRC is as follows:
FY 2000 – $12,192,000
FY 2001 – $12,942,000
FY 2002 – $13,342,000
FY 2003 – $13,792,000
FY 2004 – $14,242,000
FY 2005 – $14,417,000

The only project that we believe falls under the category of "earmarks" was $250,000 received in FY 2004 for the Vannie Cook Children's Cancer Center and Hematology Clinic in McAllen, Texas in the lower Rio Grande Valley of Texas.

The Vannie E. Cook Clinic is part of Baylor College of Medicine's Texas Children's Cancer Center and is a partnership between Baylor College of Medicine, Texas Children's Hospital and the Vannie E. Cook Jr. Children's Cancer Foundation. The mission of the Vannie E. Cook Jr. Children's Cancer and Hematology Clinic is to offer state-of-the-art comprehensive care and treatment to all children of South Texas who suffer from cancer and blood disorders, regardless of their family's ability to pay. The Vannie E. Cook Jr. Children's Cancer and Hematology Clinic is the region's first state-of-the-art pediatric hematology/oncology clinic. In addition to offering diagnostic and treatment services, the clinic provides cancer genetic counseling to individuals and families concerned about their risk of cancer, offers the services of a long term survivor program which follows childhood cancer survivors through adulthood, and conducts childhood cancer epidemiology research through a joint program with M.D. Anderson Cancer Center.

Despite the large population in McAllen and the surrounding area of South Texas, consistent pediatric hematology/oncology subspecialty care was not available before the Vannie E. Cook Jr. Children's Cancer and Hematology Clinic was established in 2001. Comprehensive pediatric cancer care was previously focused within large pediatric cancer centers based in Houston, Dallas, San Antonio and Corpus Christi. Thus, the South Texas area's population – largely Hispanic and low-income – was grossly underserved in terms of adequate pediatric cancer and hematology care.

The $250,000 funding received through a Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) grant is being used to purchase equipment for the Phase II expansion of the Clinic including a resuscitation (crash) cart for the new infusion area; a Complete Blood Count (CBC) machine to provide just-in-time, high-quality blood counts required for the diagnosis and treatment of children with cancer and blood disorders; upgrading of Telemedicine/TeleHealth

equipment to improve patient care by providing better access to specialists at Texas Children's Hospital in Houston, and other equipment to enhance care for these children.

Since HRSA is the primary Federal agency for improving access to health care services for people who are uninsured, isolated or medically vulnerable, we are most appreciative of their support of this program which cares for the at-risk children who are patients of this Clinic.

2. Baylor College of Medicine is committed to being a national leader in advancing human health through the integration of patient care, research, education, and community service. All of our research projects are measured by this mission. In addition, our Strategic Plan has as one of its five imperatives to, "lead the next generation of biomedical research." Our strategy is achieving this imperative is fourfold:
    - To establish new technologies that drive research breakthroughs
    - To create new research centers focused on important areas of human health that are prime for molecular diagnosis, prevention, and treatment
    - To expand health services research, a filed encompassing the analysis of disease, its diagnosis and treatment
    - Invest in research infrastructure, especially modern efficient laboratory facilities.

3. Beyond the Vannie Cook Children's Cancer, all of BCM's federal research funding comes to the institution through the competitive peer-reviewed process.

4. BCM does not have a policy regarding Congressional earmarks or appropriations. With regard to partnering with other institutions on research, BCM is proud to serve as the home institution of the National Space Biomedical Research Institute (NSBRI) which is funded by NASA.

   Established in 1997 through a NASA competition, the NSBRI is working on countermeasures to the health-related problems and physical and psychological challenges men and women will face on long-duration missions. The research consortium's primary objective is to ensure safe and productive human space flight.

   Projects also address key technologies required to enable and enhance exploration. In particular, NSBRI scientists and physicians are developing technologies to provide medical monitoring, diagnosis and treatment in the extreme environments of the moon and Mars.

   NSBRI discoveries impact medical care on Earth. While solving space health issues, the Institute is transferring the solutions to patients suffering from similar conditions, including osteoporosis, muscle wasting, shift-related sleep disorders, balance disorders and cardiovascular system problems.

   NSBRI scientists worked with NASA to revise the NASA Bioastronautics Roadmap that identifies and prioritizes the most critical risks confronting extended space flight.

The NSBRI is comprised of 12 consortium members including:

- Baylor College of Medicine
- Brookhaven National Laboratory
- Harvard Medical School
- The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and Applied Physics Laboratory
- Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- Morehouse School of Medicine
- Mount Sinai School of Medicine
- Rice University
- Texas A&M University
- University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences
- University of Pennsylvania Health System
- University of Washington

5. BCM has a government relations representative based in Washington, DC.

6. In certain circumstances, such as the Vannie E. Cook Jr. Children's Cancer and Hematology Clinic, earmarked funds were beneficial in providing support for a program for which no other federal funds were available. In these situations, funds of this type made a significant impact in an area of incredible need.

Thank you again for allowing us to share with you some of the important work taking place at Baylor College of Medicine.

Regards,

Wayne J. Riley, M.D., MBA, FACP
Vice President and Vice Dean
Health Affairs & Governmental Relations

Cc: Peter G. Traber, M.D.